

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **O'CALLAGHANS MILLS**
County : **CLARE**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 03-07-2002

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2002	Mark Awarded 2001
Overall Developmental Approach	50	31	31
The Built Environment	40	30	31
Landscaping	40	30	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	17	17
Litter Control	40	31	31
Tidiness	20	14	15
Residential Areas	30	23	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	29	29
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	211	214

O'Callaghan's Mills, Co. Clare

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for submission outlining your vision and intentions for the next four years. This is a good discipline for you and gives you the opportunity to plan your work programme on a phased basis. Your first positive step with a new plan is to recognise the problems and acknowledge the strong points in and around the village. Of course any plan will only be as good as its implementation. On a yearly basis you should, at the beginning of the season, list your projects for the current year, and tackle them with the help of other agencies if necessary.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

You have a plethora of old unoccupied houses - most of them in a very poor state. Until these are tackled you will not progress in the competition. This situation is a bit puzzling in view of the current spate of houses that are being built in almost every village. All of these derelict buildings have a high value for potential use and the village in general could be transformed if an intensive village renewal plan were formulated and implemented. Public buildings looked well again this year, but the community hall is still a let down. Its environs are being treated shabbily e.g. demolished pillar, poor surface, overgrown grass and poorly presented walls. A community hall should reflect the image of the village and in this respect you are not doing justice to your outlined plan. The school is your best presented building. The Mills Tavern forecourt is poor and the fuel pumps are badly in need of improved presentation. It is regrettable to witness the old mill and especially the water wheel in such condition. This is now a unique part of your heritage and the name of the village alone would lead one to expect the wheel and mill to be improved.

LANDSCAPING

You have ample opportunity to increase your marks here. In general, there is great evidence of wonderful previous effort in this section. Despite poor maintenance there was a welcome display of flowers in and around the village. A good example of falling back is illustrated on the Feakle approach where the garden seat and nearby flower tub have been allowed to virtually disintegrate.

Your efforts here should be directed towards restoring and revitalising previous effort before you embark on new projects. You have many fine mature trees to complement the tree planting of previous years, but your task now is for improved presentation. The long distance between the Community Hall and the village core is badly in need of grass trimming. Even a few evenings of turn out by your committee would transform this area.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Most centres would rejoice at having such an attractive river as the one at the mill flowing through their village or town. The East Clare Display Board does illustrate the wildlife of the area and this is commendable.

You have great opportunity to gain valuable marks from the promotion of wildlife in and around the village. Your plant life is contributing favourably to wildlife and this is acknowledged.

LITTER CONTROL

You have held your mark in this section and in general the village did not show signs of litter - so well done.

TIDINESS

As mentioned, you have a serious problem with excessive dereliction and unoccupied premises. There is an inordinate amount of rubble being left at open spaces. In particular many side entrances are very untidy. Even the painting of farm gates in the village would help. The area around the display map is untidy and needs a good clean up. The Eircom telephone kiosk is now almost derelict and needs replacing. The restorational work on the Post Office offers opportunity to landscape this area to a high standard. You have many rusty corrugated sheds in need of painting. Corrugated roofs can be quite attractive as is evident from the house opposite the display map.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

There are some very fine new houses on the Tulla approach. These need to be landscaped to a high standard as they present an impressive image from this approach. Doonáille looked well again this year although some boundary walls need attention. The Tim Smythe memorial is excellent and well maintained. Throughout the village there are many well presented houses where individual effort is good. You need to apply the same enthusiasm collectively

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The road structure is good, but verges and gutters are in need of attention. As mentioned last year, the rural character here is well defined. Residents with prominent side and rear entrances should be encouraged to keep their areas well

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The village has potential to be a high scorer in the competition. The most obvious requirement is the restoration of previous years work and the improved maintenance of existing developments.

Good luck with your plans!